

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 An automated software distribution method comprising:
 - receiving a request to access a software distribution system;
 - determining if the requester is a registered user;
 - determining if a user has authorization to perform internal or commercial scaleable software distribution framework activity;
 - performing an internal process associated with a scaleable software distribution framework if authorized; and
 - performing a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction if authorized.
- 2 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 further comprising notifying said requester that access is not granted.
- 3 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the request is received from an internal user via an internal LAN.
- 4 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the request is received from an external user via the Internet.

5 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the user is able to access an internal storage of software products.

6 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein an internal user is able to download software code, make changes and upload the modified code.

7 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction is engaged in an electronic commerce environment.

8 The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein a software transaction process is utilized.

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10 An internal software publishing process comprising:
receiving a request to engage in software image publishing activities;
engaging in a data population process;
checking a software distribution information to ensure the requester has authorization to engage in software image publication activities;
receiving requisite supervisory authorization to proceed with the publication; and
executing a software publication.

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11 The internal software publishing process of Claim 10 wherein the request is received from a software engineer that has built a software image ready for commercial release.

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12 The internal software publishing process of Claim 10 wherein the data population process includes a software distribution framework (SWDF) Information Model, SWDF Product Model and SWDF Packaging Model.

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13 The internal software publishing process of Claim 10 wherein the software distribution framework (SWDF) packaging model is completed by pulling data from a database that includes features that map a software image and software product code.

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14 The internal software publishing process of Claim 10 wherein software distribution framework (SWDF) authorization information is checked to make sure the requester has appropriate role responsibility to engage in image publishing.

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15 A commercial transaction process comprising:
examining the commercial transaction rights of a requester;
making a determination if the requester has entitlement to proceed with a commercial transaction;
engaging in a commercial transaction entitlement process;

investigating to determine if a Requester successfully completed a commercial transaction entitlement process; and
executing the Requested commercial transaction.

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16 A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the SWDF system stores information on the commercial transaction rights of external customers.

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17 A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the SWDF system stores information on the entitlements of external customers to engage in commercial transactions.

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18 A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the SWDF Entitlement Information includes information on whether the customer has a service contract or paid money for the requested software product and if the customer has entitlement to proceed the requested software product is downloaded.

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19 A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the commercial transaction process is an electronic commerce process.

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20 A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the software product comprises software image binary executables, readme information,

installation instructions, product manuals, guide and software requirements, and software release note, and software licensing key.

- 20
- 21 An automated software distribution system comprising:
- a means for communicating information associated with an automated software distribution method;
 - a means for processing said information associated with an automated software distribution method; and
 - a means for storing and tracking said information associated with an automated software distribution method.

- 21
- 22 An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is organized in accordance with software distribution framework (SWDF) modules that manage the software distribution information and activities in accordance with SWDF models.

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- 23 An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is organized in accordance with software distribution framework (SWDF) modules that manage the software distribution information and activities in accordance with SWDF models.

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24 An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is tracked and manipulated by means for indicating classes, attributes and operations.

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25 An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 further comprising a means for managing different areas of framework information including user information, authorization information, software information, configuration information, commerce information, publication information, and distribution information.

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26 An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 further comprising information objects are linked together by a means for uniquely identifying the object.

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27 An automated software distribution apparatus comprising:
a bus for communicating information associated with an automated software distribution method;
a processor for processing said information associated with an automated software distribution method; and
a memory for storing and tracking said information associated with an automated software distribution method.

28 An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 wherein said bus is communicatively coupled to a communication network.

29 An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 an automated software distribution method is implemented via said communications network.

30 An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 wherein an XML-based software distribution framework is utilized to enable automatic distribution of software over the Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) while coordinating, correlating and collecting information that assists software distribution management and maintenance activities.

31 An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27 wherein software images are published based on software rights associated with a business rule/responsibility model and software products are distributed to customers based on commerce model.

32 A computer usable medium having a computer readable program code embodied therein for causing a computer system to perform an automated software distribution method comprising:

receiving a request to access a software distribution system;

determining if the requester is a registered user;

determining if a user has authorization to perform internal or commercial scaleable software distribution framework activity;

performing an internal process associated with a scaleable software distribution framework if authorized; and

performing a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction if authorized.

33 The automated software distribution method of Claim 32 wherein the request is received from an external user via the Internet.

34 The automated software distribution method of Claim 32 wherein the user is able to access an internal storage of software products.

35 The automated software distribution method of Claim 34 wherein an internal user is able to download software code, make changes and upload the modified code and both internal and external users are able to engage in a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction.